
	MESQUITE POLICE DEPARTMENT
	314.00 POLICE FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM
	Effective Date: August, 2011
	Approved: _____  Chief of Police

Purpose:

This order recognizes that the spirit of the Mesquite Police Department is one of helping people and providing assistance at every opportunity. This includes assistance to the Department's police family, and especially during the time when an active member of the Department suffers a life-threatening injury/illness or death.

The purpose of this order is to offer impartial assistance to all members of the Department's police family. It must be understood that services provided to the police family are dependent upon a number of factors. These include such things as the availability of the Department's resources and the Department's primary role of providing public safety to our community. The Chief of Police may approve deviations from this order depending upon those factors.

I. Definitions:

- A. Active Member Injury, Illness, or Death in the Line-of-duty: A member of the Department, who suffers a life-threatening or fatal injury or illness while taking any official action.
- B. Active Member Injury, Illness, or Death Not in the Line-of-Duty: A member of the Department, who suffers a life-threatening or fatal illness while off duty and which is non-police related.
- C. Retired Member Death: The death of a retired member who is in good standing and fully separated through retirement from the Department.
 - 1. A retiree is defined as:
 - a. Any sworn or non-sworn member who resigns in good standing, having completed at least 20 years of service, regardless of age; or
 - b. Any sworn or non-sworn member who resigns in good standing and who is eligible to receive city pension benefits; or
 - c. Any former sworn or non-sworn member who is receiving a City disability pension.
- D. Death of Another Law Enforcement Agency Member: A member of an agency, which is involved in crime and juvenile delinquency control or reduction, or enforcement of criminal laws, who dies while taking action that the member is authorized or obligated by law, rule, regulation, or condition of employment or service, whether on or off-duty.
- E. Honors
 - 1. Full Departmental Honors.
 - a. Full Departmental Honors are the rendering of honors at the funeral of a member of the Department who died in the line-of-duty.
 - b. The following Full Departmental Honors will be rendered, upon approval of the family:
 - (1) All flags at police facilities will be flown at half mast, for the period of time from the death of a member, until immediately following the committal service.
 - (2) All members of the Department with badges will cover their badge with black elastic band.
 - (3) All members of the Department without badges, who wish, may cover the left vertical edge (opposite edge from where the employee's picture is located) of their identification card with a

- black elastic banding, a mourning badge band, or black tape for the period of time from first being informed of the death of a member, until immediately following the committal service. The tape or mourning band will not be placed in a manner that covers the picture or any information on the identification card.
- (4) A casket guard of one or two uniformed officers will be assigned to the deceased member for the period of time from the death of the member until the burial.
 - (5) A Departmental uniform will be provided for burial of the deceased, if the deceased was eligible to wear a uniform, and will consist of the following:
 - (a) Long sleeve uniform shirt with appropriate identification loops and sleeve patches.
 - (b) Uniform trousers.
 - (c) Waist belt.
 - (d) Sam Browne belt, keepers, empty handcuff case, and empty holster.
 - (e) Uniform black tie.
 - (f) MPD collar insignia; and/or insignia of rank for Lieutenants and above.
 - (g) Temporary badge, which will be returned to the Department.
 - (6) A cotton United States or Texas flag will be provided to drape the casket.
 - (7) Colors will be presented by the Color Guard at the committal service.
 - (8) A riderless horse will be stationed in a place of prominence, if available.
 - (9) Flag folding ceremonies will be conducted by the Ceremonial Unit.
 - (10) The flag will be presented to the family by the Chief of Police or his designee.
 - (11) A 21-gun salute will be performed by the Ceremonial Unit Firing Party.
 - (12) "Taps" will be played at the committal service.
 - (13) The bagpiper may play a committal service, if available.
 - (14) A police escort will be provided for the funeral service.

2. Departmental Honors

- a. Departmental Honors are the rendering of honors at the funeral of a member of the Department where the cause of death was not in the course or scope of the member's employment.
- b. Departmental Honors are the rendering of honors at the funeral of a retired member of the Department.
- c. The following Departmental Honors will be rendered, upon request of the family; for
 - (1) Active Member
 - (a) All members of the Department will cover their badges or identification cards while attending funeral services and until immediately following the committal service.
 - (b) A Departmental uniform will be provided for burial of the deceased, if the deceased was eligible to wear a uniform, and will consist of the following:

- (i) Long sleeve uniform shirt with appropriate identification loops and sleeve patches.
 - (ii) Uniform trousers.
 - (iii) Waist belt.
 - (iv) Sam Browne Belt, keepers, empty handcuff case, and empty holster.
 - (v) Uniform black tie.
 - (vi) MPD collar insignia; and/or insignia of rank for lieutenants and above.
 - (vii) Temporary badge, which will be returned to the Department.
 - (c) A United States or Texas burial flag will be provided to drape the casket.
 - (d) A flag folding ceremony will be conducted.
 - (e) The flag will be presented to the family.
 - (f) "Taps" will be played at the committal service.
 - (g) A police escort will be provided for the funeral services if within a reasonable driving distance.
- (2) Retired Member
- (a) All members of the Department attending funeral services for deceased retired members will cover their badges or identification cards during the funeral services and until immediately following the committal service.
 - (b) A Departmental uniform will be provided for burial of the deceased, if the deceased was eligible to wear a uniform, and will consist of the following:
 - (i) Long sleeve uniform shirt with appropriate identification loops and sleeve patches.
 - (ii) Uniform trousers.
 - (iii) Waist belt.
 - (iv) Uniform black tie.
 - (v) MPD collar insignia; and/or insignia of rank for lieutenants and above.
 - (vi) Temporary badge, which will be returned to the Department.
 - (c) A United States or Texas burial flag will be provided to drape the casket.
 - (d) A flag folding ceremony will be conducted.
 - (e) The flag will be presented to the family.
 - (f) "Taps" will be played at the committal service.
 - (g) A ceremonial police escort will be provided for the funeral services, if the services are held within a reasonable distance.

3. Ceremonial Honors

- a. Ceremonial Honors are the rendering of honors on, but not limited to the following occasions:
 - (1) The funeral of a person who the Department wishes to honor.
 - (2) National Police Week and Police Officer Memorial Day ceremonies.
 - (3) Parades or other ceremonies which the Department participates in at the direction of the Chief of Police.

- b. Ceremonial Honors can include some or all of the honors rendered as part of the Full Departmental Honors or Departmental Honors.
 - c. All Ceremonial Honors must have prior approval of the Chief of Police.
 - F. Official Departmental Burial Flags

The United States flag or the State of Texas flag are the only flags permitted to drape the casket at a service where the Department is rendering Full Departmental Honors, Departmental Honors, or Ceremonial Honors. This does not limit the use of a pall by the Roman Catholic Church or other churches, but nothing may be placed on top of the flag. The flag must be removed before the casket is covered with the pall.
 - G. Police Family Members

The term Police Family Members refers to the immediate surviving family members.
 - H. Metroplex

The term Metroplex will be considered to include the City of Mesquite, Dallas County, contiguous counties of Dallas County, and a 100 mile radius of the City of Mesquite.
- II. Responsibilities of the Police Family Support Team
 - A. The Police Family Support Team will perform the following duties and will be responsible for the coordination of the following:
 - 1. Provide liaison between the Police Family Support Team and the Chief of Police.
 - 2. Assign a Family Service Officer who will be responsible for the coordination of the overall operation of the Family Support Team. (This person will be a Member of the Family Support Team)
 - 3. Be responsible for coordinating all benefits for which the member and his/her family are eligible.
 - 4. Travel and Financial Coordinator - the Captain of the Staff Support Bureau or his designee will be responsible for coordinating any financial and/or travel arrangements, whether local or into and away from Mesquite, for Police Family Members and/or Departmental Ceremonial and Coordination personnel, in connection with the life threatening or fatal injury, illness or death of a Departmental Member.
 - 5. Coordinate with the Public Information Officer who will be responsible for coordinating the release of personal or Departmental information, and for arranging media coverage of memorial or funeral services, in connection with the life threatening injury, illness, or death of a Departmental member.
 - 6. Coordinate with a Traffic Coordinator - the Sergeant of the traffic section who will be responsible for coordinating and conducting any and all movements of vehicles involved in a funeral operation.
 - 7. Coordinating with the Commander of the Ceremonial Unit (Honor Guard) who will be responsible for all ceremonial rites involved in a funeral operation.
 - 8. Coordinate the assignment of Family Liaison Officers- officers from the injured/deceased member's division or bureau, (one or two per 8-hour shift) who will provide security, liaison, and escort for Police Family Members in connection with the serious or fatal injury, illness, or death of a Departmental member. Although this is not a command or coordination position, it does provide the role of "facilitator" between the family and the Department.
 - B. The Police Family Support Team will be activated by the Chief of Police when needed. Upon receiving notification by the Communications Section of an event listed in III. A. 1 or 2. the Police Family Support team will notify the Chief of Police, or his designee, to receive instructions on whether to activate and at what level.
 - C. The Police Family Support Team will provide coordination and communication to both the Mesquite Police Department and the Police Family Members during a time of crisis and grief.

- D. When activated, the Police Family Support team will meet at least one time a day until deactivation is ordered by the Chief of Police.
- III. Notification of the Police Family Support Team
- A. Communications Section
 - 1. The Communications Section, upon receiving information of a life-threatening, fatal injury or illness of any member of the Department, while on or off duty, will immediately notify the members of the Police Family Support Team.
 - 2. The Communications Section, upon receiving information on the situations listed below will notify the Family Support Team immediately in the event of the following:
 - a. Death of any retired member of the Department.
 - b. Notification of the death, in the line of duty, of any Texas law enforcement agency employee.
 - c. Notification of the death, in the line of duty, of any law enforcement agency employee occurring in Mesquite.
 - d. Notification of the intention of any law enforcement agency to bring to Mesquite a law enforcement employee killed in the line of duty for funeral or committal services.
- IV. Notification of the Police Family Members
- A. General procedures for bureaus regarding notification of deaths and life-threatening injuries.
 - 1. In all situations where a member of the Department is seriously or fatally injured, the Police Family Members and their needs must be given first priority and consideration.
 - 2. The name of the seriously or fatally injured member must not be released to the media before the Police Family Members are notified, whether they live in the Metroplex or outside the Metroplex.
 - 3. If the Police Family Members reside outside the Metroplex, the informing officer shall request a prompt and personal notification from the jurisdictional law enforcement agency in the area in which the surviving family resides.
 - 4. If the Mesquite Police Department is requested by another law enforcement agency to perform a personal notification of a serious injury or death of one of their members to a Police Family Member who resides within the City of Mesquite, the same courtesy and procedures shall be afforded to the agency as that which would be done for our own Police Family Member's notification.
 - 5. A member of the Family Support Team should obtain necessary information from the Emergency Notification Form. If the form indicates medical conditions or medication allergies, etc., this information should be sent to the receiving hospital.
 - B. Notification Team Composition and Responsibilities
 - 1. The notification team should be made up of a supervisor, an officer known by the injured employee's family (when possible), a female officer to assist female family members (if available), a Family Support Team Member and a chaplain or minister.
 - 2. Employees outside of the official notification team are prohibited from making contact with the Police Family Members prior to official notification.
 - 3. At least two vehicles should be used in the notification team.
 - 4. The following Police Family Members should receive immediate notification based upon the member's specifications in the emergency contact form:
 - a. Spouse and children
 - b. Parents
 - c. Others, as requested by the family.

5. Prior to arrival of the notification team, accurate and up-to-date information should be secured. The notification team's goal should be to make a timely notification before Police Family Members learn through other means.
 6. If a member immediately notifies his/her spouse of the life-threatening injury or death of a co-worker, the member's spouse should be told not to call the injured or deceased member's spouse. This lessens the possibility of a premature notification.
- V. Response to Life-threatening Injuries & Death in the Line-of-duty
- A. The Police Family Members will be considered to be:
 1. Spouse
 2. Sons and daughters, and guardian if the child is under 18 years of age
 3. Spouses of the sons and daughters
 4. Father, mother, stepfather, and stepmother
 5. Brothers and sisters, if under 18 years of age
 - B. When a member of the Department suffers a life-threatening injury or illness, or is killed in the line-of-duty in the Metroplex, the following will be provided for the Police Family Members by the Department:
 1. Personal notification of the Police Family Members in the Metroplex.
 2. When Police Family Members are not in the Metroplex, notification to the jurisdictional law enforcement agency in which the surviving family resides will be made.
 - a. Transportation to the medical facility or other location of local Police Family Members
 - b. If requested, a uniformed officer will be posted at the family residence while the family is taken to the medical facility or other location, and will remain until replaced by the Family Liaison Officers.
 - c. Family Liaison Officers will be available 24 hours per day to assist the Police Family Members.
 - d. If the Police Family Members reside outside the Metroplex, they will be provided transportation during their length of stay, if necessary.
 - e. All Departmental members will guard against making any promises to the family, and will not make additions to the list, without prior consent of the Chief of Police, through the Police Family Support Team.
 - f. The above supportive measures will be provided from the time of the life-threatening injury until the member's life is no longer threatened, or in the event of death, 24 hours after the committal services.
 - g. Full Departmental Honors will be rendered.
 - C. When a member of the Department suffers a life-threatening injury or illness in the line-of duty outside the Metroplex, the following will be provided for the Police Family Members by the Department:
 1. If requested, a uniformed officer will be posted at the residence while the family is absent, and will remain until the family returns home.
 2. In the case of a member being hospitalized outside the Metroplex, a member of the Family Support Team will serve as the Family Liaison Officer.
 3. Arrangements for transportation of Police Family Members will be made with the jurisdictional law enforcement agency in the area where the member is hospitalized.
 4. The above will be provided from the time of the life-threatening injury until the member's life is no longer threatened. This time may be extended with approval of the Chief of Police.
 - D. When a member of the Department is killed in the line-of-duty outside the Metroplex, the Department will provide the following for the Police Family Members:

1. A member of the Family Support Team will be sent to the location where the Departmental member has been killed to handle the logistical details and provide escort for the remains.
 2. All other details as provided for a member of the Department being killed in the line-of duty in the Metroplex.
- VI. Response to Life-threatening Injury or Illness & Death, Not in the Line-of-duty
- A. The Department will provide the following for the Police Family Members:
 1. When the Police Family Members reside in the Metroplex:
 - a. Personal notification of Police Family Members
 - b. Transportation to the medical facility or other location of the Police Family Members
 - c. If requested, a uniformed officer will be posted at the family residence while the family is taken to the medical facility or other location and will remain until replaced by the Family Liaison Officers.
 - d. Family Liaison Officers will be available, as needed or requested, 24 hours per day from the time of notification until the member's life is no longer threatened, or if death occurs, until burial. The time period may be extended with approval of the Chief of Police.
 - e. Departmental Honors will be rendered.
 2. When the Police Family Members reside outside the Metroplex:
 - a. Notification will be made to the jurisdictional law enforcement agency in which the immediate surviving family member resides.
 - b. Out of town Police Family Members will be picked up at the airport.
 - c. Department Honors will be rendered with approval of the Chief of Police.
 3. The Department cannot provide for any expenses incurred by the Police Family Members.
- VII. Response to the Death of a Retiree
- A. The Department will provide the following to the Police Family Members if the funeral, memorial, and/or committal service is held in the Metroplex:
 1. The Family Support Team will be available to assist with the funeral service.
 2. If requested, Departmental Honors will be rendered.
 - B. The Department cannot provide for any expenses incurred by Police Family Members.
- VIII. Departmental Representation at Out of Town Funeral Services (MPD Line-of-duty Deaths)
- A. The following Departmental persons will accompany the family and remains, when applicable, to out of town funerals:
 1. Family Support Team
 2. Honor Detail (Pallbearers) (Maximum 8 Members)
 - B. When transportation to out of town funerals is made available through the Department, the following Departmental persons may travel to the funeral:
 1. Executive Staff (unless other transportation is available for them)
 2. Public Information Officer (maximum 1 member)
 3. Ceremonial Unit (maximum 20 members)
 4. Usher Detail (maximum 4 members)
 - C. The Department will provide personnel and vehicles, including transportation expenses, lodging, and meals, if the funeral and burial location are within a reasonable driving distance. The numbers of personnel and vehicles shall be approved by the Chief of Police.
- IX. Demeanor of Officers (Other than the Ceremonial Personnel) at Memorial, Funeral, and Committal Services
- A. Memorial and Funeral Services

1. The word chapel is interpreted to include church, funeral home, or other inside location where a memorial or funeral service is held, other than the committal service.
 2. The word casket is interpreted to include any receptacle containing the remains of the deceased, including cremated remains.
 3. Appropriate attire for uniformed personnel will be a long sleeve uniform shirt, uniform trousers, black tie, and uniform hat.
 4. The words cover and uncover are interpreted to be the placing of a hat and the removing of a hat from one's head.
 5. When inside the chapel, the following will apply:
 - a. Honor Guard members posted at the casket will remain covered.
 - b. All other personnel with hats will remain uncovered and will carry the hat under the non-gun side when not seated.
 - c. All personnel, while passing in review, will cover if a military salute is rendered. The Chief of Police, or his designee, will direct whether a salute will be rendered by personnel while passing in review.
 6. When outside the chapel, all personnel wearing hats will remain covered at all times.
- B. Committal Services
1. At a law enforcement funeral, persons in uniform will come to ATTENTION and will execute a military salute at the command, PRESENT ARMS, which will be given:
 - a. Any time the flag is being moved
 - b. When the casket is moved from the site of the funeral/memorial service to the hearse, or from the hearse to the site of the committal service
 - c. During the firing of volleys by the Ceremonial Unit.
 - d. While "Taps" is being played
 2. At a law enforcement funeral, law enforcement personnel not in uniform will place the right hand over the heart at the command, PRESENT ARMS, which will be given:
 - a. Any time the flag is being moved.
 - b. During the firing of volleys by the Ceremonial Unit.
 - c. While "Taps" is being played
- C. The military salute or the right hand over the heart will be held until the command, ORDER ARMS, is given.
- D. In accordance with the military custom, hats will not be removed for prayers, but all personnel will bow their heads, as a sign of respect.
- E. Uniformed personnel will be at ATTENTION, unless directed to move to the position of PARADE REST by the Ceremonial Unit during the outdoor committal service.
- X. Explanation of Funeral Operations and Benefits to the Police Family
- A. To avoid misunderstandings by Police Family Members, only personnel of the Family Support Team are authorized to discuss what benefits the family may be eligible to receive.
 - B. A member of the Family Support Team will contact the family as soon as practical to explain the benefits to which the family is entitled.
- XI. Police Employee's Emergency Contact Form
- A. All members of the Department are encouraged to complete an "Emergency Contact Form".
 - B. Bureau Commanders will remind members that they are encouraged to update their "Emergency Contact Form" anytime a change occurs.
 - C. "Emergency Contact Forms" will be maintained in the computer system.
- XII. Memorial Accounts and Donations

Any member of the Department receiving a donation for the family of a member of the Department who has died will immediately forward the donation to the office of the Chief of Police.

XIII. Death or Injury of a Member of the Department:

Death of A Member

- A. When a member is killed or dies while working, the Watch Commander will:
 - 1. Notify the Chief of Police
 - 2. Notify the Communications Section to mobilize the Police Family Support Team if authorized by the Chief of Police
 - 3. Notify the member's Bureau Commander.
 - 4. Notify the Public Information Officer.
- B. When a member is killed or dies while off duty, and the death is not duty related, the Watch Commander will:
 - 1. Notify the Chief of Police
 - 2. Notify the Communications Section to mobilize the Police Family Support Team if authorized by the Chief of Police
 - 3. Notify the member's Bureau Commander.
 - 4. Notify the Public Information Officer.
- C. When a member is killed or dies whether on or off duty, the Family Support Team:
 - 1. Will be responsible for having the member's police issued equipment and personal belongings collected and inventoried.
 - 2. Will see that the member's police issued equipment is delivered to and signed for by an employee of the Property Room.
 - 3. Will see that the member's personal belongings are delivered to and signed for by the spouse, parents, nearest responsible relative, or by the executor of the estate. If any questions arise concerning who should be given possession of the personal belongings, the City Attorney's office will be consulted.
 - 4. Will forward the two inventory lists and the signed receipts to the Personnel Division.
- D. When a member is killed or dies while working, the Communications Section will send a Teletype concerning the incident to the other law enforcement agencies. When funeral arrangements are set, this information will also be transmitted.

XIV. Injury of a Member

- A. When a member obtains a life-threatening injury while working, the Watch Commander will:
 - 1. Notify the Chief of Police
 - 2. Notify the Communications Section to mobilize the Family Support Team if authorized by the Chief of Police
 - 3. Notify the member's Bureau Commander
 - 4. Notify the Public Information Officer.
- B. When a member is seriously or critically injured while off duty, and not duty related, the Watch Commander will:
 - 1. Notify the Chief of Police
 - 2. Notify the Communications Section to mobilize the Police Family Support team if authorized by the Chief of Police
 - 3. Notify the member's Bureau Commander
 - 4. Notify the Public Information Officer.

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